

## **About the Authority**

The Orange County Housing Authority (OCHA) was established in 1971 pursuant to State legislation. Its funding source is the U. S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). In 1975, the OCHA entered into an Annual Contributions Contract with HUD and received its first allocation of rental assistance units.

In 1986, the OCHA was transitioned from an independent agency into the County of Orange government. The OCHA is a division within the organizational structure of the Housing and Community Development Department and now operates as the Housing Assistance Division, but is generally referred to by its public corporation name: the Orange County Housing Authority.

#### **A. ORGANIZATIONAL SET-UP**

The Housing and Community Development Department is a function within the Orange County Government, under the guidance of the Housing and Community Development Commission for Section 8 operational policy of the Housing Choice Voucher Program and the Board of Supervisors, acting as the Board of Commissioners, for financial and County administrative policy. The Director of the Housing and Community Development Department (H&CD) is the Executive Director of the OCHA and administers policy as prescribed by the above Board and the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.

The Manager of the Housing Assistance Division has been designated to represent all Housing Choice Voucher Program and the OCHA related matters to the Housing and Community Development Commission and to be responsible for the day-to-day operation of the three sections within the Orange County Housing Authority. Each of these OCHA Sections is headed by a Section Chief.

- **Occupancy**
- **Rental Assistance (Leasing)**
- **Special Housing Programs**

The OCHA is responsible for administering all facets of the Housing Choice Voucher Rental Assistance Programs, beginning with responding to HUD's Notices of Fund Availability (NOFA), identifying families and owners eligible to participate in the program, and maintaining lease-up of the available allocation.

Activities of this Authority include:

- Program Development;
- Marketing and outreach;
- Determination of applicant eligibility/ineligibility;
- Establishment of applicant preference;
- Processing of initial applicant eligibility;
- Providing notifications to applicants;
- Issuing Housing Choice Vouchers;
- Conducting individual and group briefings;
- Monitoring the success of Housing Choice Voucher holders locating suitable housing;
- Processing requests for tenancy approval;
- Conducting dwelling unit inspections;

- Negotiating rents and prepare contract and lease documents;
- Maintaining active leases and contracts during the annual inspection of units;
- Performing annual recertification of tenant eligibility
- Assisting in resolving tenant/landlord issues;
- Reviewing and process special claims;
- Conducting informal reviews and hearings;
- Coordinating and prepare funding applications;
- Providing input into the preparation of budgets, financial reports, policies, procedures, goals and standards;
- Controlling and monitor program allocations;
- Administering special programs as allowed by HUD and funded and approved by the Board of Commissioners;
- Preparing and submitting annual program reports and documentation to HUD as required; and
- Preparing program related correspondence.

**Occupancy Section:**

**Intake Unit:**

**Responsibilities include:**

- Pre-applications
- Waiting list management
- Initial interview appointments
- Verification
- Eligibility determinations
- Housing Choice Voucher issuance
- Briefings schedule and presentation
- Applicant status changes
- Fraud referrals/informal reviews

**Residency Unit:**

**Responsibilities include:**

- Annual reexaminations
- Housing assistance payment and total tenant payment determinations
- Family status and income change processing
- Fraud referrals/informal hearings
- Tenant repayment agreements
- Termination transfers and regular terminations
- Verifications
- Income discrepancies
- Reporting functions, including HUD's Section 8 Management Assessment Program (SEMAP)

**Rental Assistance (Leasing) Section:**

**Responsibilities include:**

- Voucher rent determinations
- Lease negotiations and explanations
- Housing assistance contracts
- Initial, annual and special inspections
- Interjurisdictional mobility inspections - incoming
- Fraud referrals/informal hearings
- Quality control inspections
- Landlord/tenant issues
- Rent reasonableness determinations
- Maintain the list of interested landlords and available properties

**Special Housing Programs Section:**

- Coordinate interjurisdictional and intrajurisdictional transfers:
  - Portability
  - Mobility - out
- Reviewing, scheduling coordinating hearings and claims
- City liaison activities
- Preparing applications and develop new programs
- Coordinating contracts with hearing officers, District Attorney investigators and legal assistance
- Coordinating investigation activities
- Family Self-Sufficiency Program (FSS) and related case management
- Family Unification Program (FUP)
- Shelter Plus Care (S+C) Program
- Contract administration of Section 8 New Construction
- Section 236 and Section 8 New Construction buy-outs coordination
- Section 8 Homeownership Program
- HUD Section 8 legislative monitoring, analysis and review

The following County Departments provide direct services to the Orange County Housing Authority:

- County Executive Office (CEO), including CEO Human Resources
- Auditor Controller
- County Counsel
- District Attorney
- Social Services Agency (SSA)
- Health Care Agency (HCA)
- Community Services Agency (CSA)
- Public Facilities and Resources Department

**B. DESCRIPTION OF PROGRAMS OFFERED**

The OCHA administers the following programs:

- Housing Choice Voucher Program
- Contract Administrator for Section 8 New Construction projects
- Family Self-Sufficiency Program
- Family Unification Program
- Shelter Plus Care Program

The OCHA records all expenditures according to program type. Expenditures that are general in nature and apply to all programs are allocated using a trend analysis methodology that complies with the Office of Management and Budget.

**C. LEGAL JURISDICTION**

The jurisdiction of the Orange County Housing Authority includes all of the geographic area of Orange County with the exception the following cities (who operate their own Housing Authority):

- Anaheim
- Garden Grove
- Santa Ana

**D. RECORDS RETENTION**

OCHA will retain all tenant- and owner-related records and files in accordance with HUD and Federal Regulations, or five (5) years, whichever is the longest.

